



Friday, April 8, 2005

Engleman Conners Renominated as NTSB Chair; Rosenker Nominated for Second Term



The White House recently announced it has nominated Ellen G. Engleman Conners again to serve as Chairman of the NTSB for a term of two years. Ms. Engleman Conners has been a Member and Chairman of the Board since her confirmation in March of 2003. During her administration the Safety Board was able to successfully close more than 400 safety recommendations covering all of the major modes of transportation (see sidebar page 2). Over the past two years, Engleman Conners has been the Board Member and on scene spokesman for the Safety Board's investigations of the Staten Island ferry and the Baltimore water taxi accidents; she chaired the public hearing of an airliner crash in Charlotte, North Carolina; and directed



the Board's investigations into a number of significant accidents, including the Santa Monica, California, elderly driver crash into an open air market and the catastrophic release of anhydrous ammonia from rail tankers in Minot, North Dakota. Chairman-designate Engleman Conners continues to serve as a Board Member while going through the confirmation process.

The White House also announced it has nominated Mark V. Rosenker to be a Member of the Board for a second term ending December 31, 2010. President Bush also designated Rosenker Vice Chairman of the Board for a two-year term ending in early April 2007. Mr. Rosenker is serving as Acting Chairman during the confirmation process of Chairman-designate Engleman Conners. Rosenker joined the NTSB in March of 2003 and was designated by President Bush as Vice Chairman in early April of 2003. Since that time he has been the Board Member on scene for two accidents including last year's derailment of Amtrak's City of New Orleans near Flora, Mississippi, and the crash of a charter jet in Houston, Texas, that was scheduled to pick up former President George H.W. Bush. He also joined the Board's go team for the investigation into the June 2003 capsizing of the charter fishing vessel Taki-Tooo near Garibaldi, Oregon. Mr Rosenker will also go through the Senate confirmation process for his second Board Member term.

Member Carol Carmody Completes Her Term at the NTSB

April 1, 2005, was Member Carol Carmody's last day as an active member of the NTSB. In the 5 years of her tenure, Ms. Carmody served as Acting Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Member of the NTSB. She was the on-scene Member at several major transportation accidents, including the aircraft accidents that killed Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan in October 2000 and Minnesota Senator Paul Wellstone in October 2002, the derailment of an Amtrak train in Kensington, Maryland, in July 2002, and the March 2001 crash of an airliner in Aspen, Colorado, that killed all 18 persons aboard.



Acting Chairman Mark V. Rosenker said, "I want to thank Carol for her service to the Board. As she departs today, Carol can take great pride in knowing that her direct efforts and those resulting from Board actions over the last 5 years have done much to make our nation's transportation modes significantly safer. I wish her all the best in her future endeavors." As Ms. Carmody departs, we remember her leadership and dedication, which have been invaluable to improving our nation's transportation safety. She will be greatly missed, but we wish her the best in her future endeavors.

Launch to Washington State for Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials

Investigator-in-Charge Cyril Gura and Mechanical Group Chair Russ Quimby (RPH-10) launched to the Amtrak derailment that occurred Sunday, April 3, near Home Valley, Washington. The train was eastbound Amtrak Train No. 27, the Portland section of the Empire Builder, with one locomotive and 4 cars. The derailment occurred on a 3-degree curve with continuously welded rail and concrete ties. All equipment remained coupled, but some cars leaned about 45 degrees. Of the 105 passengers and 9 crewmembers aboard (some crewmembers were deadheading), 24 people received medical attention, including 6 crewmembers. Examination of the concrete ties showed areas of abrasion that allowed the tie plates to shift from the intended position and allowed the high-side rail to rotate outward. Parties to the investigation include the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, the Federal Railroad Administration, the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, and Amtrak.



Aviation Investigation Workshop in China

Six NTSB staff members have traveled to Zhuhai, China, to conduct an accident investigation workshop for the Civil Aviation Authority China (CAAC). Vern Ellingstad (RE-1), Bob MacIntosh (AS-21), Jeff Guzzetti (AS-2R), Bob Benzon (AS-10), John O'Callaghan (RE-60), and Keith McGuire (AS-NWRA) are conducting the sessions, which run from April 5 through 13.

New Director, Office of Administration



Congratulations to Ms. Lola Ward, who has been appointed to serve as the new Director in the Office of Administration. Ms. Ward came to the Safety Board in September 2003 and has served as the Chief of the Acquisition Division for the last 18 months. The functions of Ms. Ward's new office include human resources, acquisition, and facilities.

Before coming to the Safety Board, Ms. Ward was Director of Contracts and Procurement at the DOT's Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), where she led many procurement reforms. During her DOT career, she held various management positions, including a detail as RSPA's Director of Human Resources. She also served as RSPA's Acting Associate Administrator for Management and Administration. While at the DOT, Ms. Ward received the Administrator's Eagle Award for the rapid renovation of DOT's Crisis Management Center in the wake of the events of September 11, 2001.

NTSB Welcomes



The NTSB welcomes Ms. Nancy Lewis, who joined us Monday, April 4, as Special Assistant in the Office of Member Deborah A. P. Hersman. Ms. Lewis joins us from the Chief Counsel's Office at the Transportation Security Administration, where she worked on legislation and other Congressional matters. Ms. Lewis also served as counsel to the Office of Maritime and Land, participating in the design of a rail/transit security inspection program and development of the Transportation Security Operational Plan. Before TSA, Ms. Lewis was with the Office of Chief Counsel, Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), where she worked on rail safety enforcement and regulatory development.

NTSB ACADEMY

*To save time and reduce travel expenses,
particularly for NTSB staff in the regional offices, the Academy has scheduled both its
Human Factors courses back-to-back in April.*

Cognitive Interviewing for Accident Investigators (April 19-20, Tuesday - Wednesday)
Investigating Human Fatigue Factors (April 21-22, Thursday - Friday)

Cognitive Interviewing will be led by research psychologist Ron Fisher, Ph.D., of Florida International University. Dr. Fisher has developed and refined a series of interviewing techniques designed to elicit the maximum amount of accurate information from witnesses to an accident/incident. NTSB investigators will present case studies illustrating principles discussed in class.

Investigating Human Fatigue will be led by Mark Rosekind, Ph.D, who in addition to his past consulting work with the Safety Board, is internationally recognized for his dynamic presentations on how sleep patterns, circadian rhythms, and levels of alertness affect operational performance factors that have been increasingly identified in accident causation. Case studies by NTSB investigators will be included to demonstrate key concepts.

Although space is available now, we do expect this course to fill up within the next few weeks. Staff interested in attending are encouraged to register soon to guarantee a seat. http://www.nts.gov/Academy/sched_courses.htm